

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 08674 201559Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 /077 W
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R 201526Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1006
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
/USMISSION USUN 564
USIA WASHDC
DIA WASHDC

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 8674

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE
SUBJECT: DECEMBER 19-20 SYRIAN MEDIA HIGHLIGHT ASAD/SADAT
TALKS

1. MEDIA FOCUSED ON ASAD-SADAT TALKS IN CAIRO. PRESS
BANNERED: "WARM RECEPTION TO PRESIDENT ASAD IN CAIRO.
MASSES WELCOME COMRADE-AT-ARMS AND PARTNER IN OCTOBER WAR.
CLOSED MEETING HELD BETWEEN ASAD AND SADAT. OFFICIAL
TALKS INCLUDE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN ME SITUATION, CON-
SOLIDATION OF ARAB SOLIDARITY AND BILATERAL RELATIONS.
ASAD -- 'SYRIAN-EGYPTIAN COOPERATION IS GREAT GOAL DEMANDED
BY MASSES. IN OCTOBER WE ACHIEVED SELF-CONFIDENCE AND
RECOVERED ARAB DIGNITY.' SADAT -- 'EGYPTIAN-SYRIAN
COOPERATION THROUGHOUT HISTORY WAS DEFENSE LINE AGAINST
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ANY FOREIGN INVASION." MEDIA ACCOUNTS NOTED THAT
TWO DELEGATIONS MET FOR ONE HOUR DECEMBER 19 AND THAT
TWO PRESIDENTS THEN MET IN CLOSED SESSION FOR NEARLY
THREE HOURS. SECOND MEETING SCHEDULED FOR 1230L
DEC. 20.

2. AL-BAATH CITED VIEW OF "POLITICAL CIRCLES" THAT MEETING, FOLLOWING ON HEELS OF TERMINATION OF LEBANESE CIVIL WAR AND ASAD VISIT TO AMMAN, SUGGESTS THAT "QUESTION OF FORMING EASTERN FRONT UNDER CONSIDERATION." AS WELL AS STRENGTHENING CAR. REVIEW OF ARAB PRESS NOTED STRESS OF CAIRO PAPERS ON INCLUDING LEBANESE AND PALESTINIAN REPS IN INVITATION FOR GENEVA CONFERENCE.

3. AL-THAWRAH COLUMNIST OPINED THAT ASAD VISIT TO CAIRO MUST BE VIEWED FROM PERSPECTIVE OF FRAWING UP ALTERNATIVES TO POSSIBLE FAILURE OF GENEVA CONFERENCE: "THE MERE PASSAGE OF RECENT UN RES. DOES NOT MEAN IT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED." HE REFERRED TO PRESIDENT ASAD'S STATEMENT THAT GENEVA CONFERENCE MIGHT BE CONVENED BUT POSSIBILITY OF ITS FAILURE MUST BE CONSIDERED. HE SUGGESTED THAT ARABS SHOULD BE READY FOR ALL EVENTUALITIES, AND NOT BE SEDUCED BY APPEARANCE OF MOVEMENT TOWARD PEACE BEFORE APPEARANCES TAKE CONCRETE FORM.

4. MEDIA REPORTED VISIT TO DAMASCUS DEC. 18 OF PLO DELEGATION INCLUDING SOME EXCOMM MEMBERS AND LEADERS OF SOME PLO FEDAYEEN GROUPS. DELEGATION RECEIVED BY BAATH PARTY DEPSEC GEN ABDULLAH AL-AHMAR. DELEGATION "REAFFIRMED STRATEGIC NATURE OF SYRO-PALESTINIAN RELATIONS AND NECESSITY OF MAINTAINING AND DEEPENING COOPERATION AND ROOTING OUT ALL FORCES TRYING TO UNDERMINE THIS RELATIONSHIP."

5. AL-BAATH EDITORIAL CLAIMED THAT SUPPLY OF SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS TO ISRAEL LINKED TO SPECIFIC DIPLOMATIC AND UNCLASSIFIED

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STRATEGIC POSITION DRAWN UP BY SECRETARY KISSINGER, WHICH SECRETARY INTENDS TO PASS ON TO SECRETARY VANCE. EDITORIAL APPEALED FOR ARABS TO MOBILIZE ALL MILITARY, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL POTENTIALITIES.

6. CONCERNING LEBANON, PRESS REPORTED PRIMIN HUSS MET WITH AMIR FAHD AND RECEIVED LATTER'S ASSURANCE THAT SAUDI ARABIA READY TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY JOINT ARAB PROGRAM TO ASSIST LEBANESE RECONSTRUCTION. IN BEIRUT, GOVT. EMPLOYEES ORDERED TO RESUME WORK DEC. 20; POSTAL SERVICES SCHEDULED TO BEGIN AGAIN SAME DAY. DEFMIN BUTRSO HELD MEETING WITH SENIOR ARMY OFFICERS. GHASSAN TWEINI DESCRIBED MEETING WITH STATE DEPT OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON AS FRUITFUL. MURPHY

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